

P240
Am 32
No. 56



No. 56.

LOST OR SAVED!

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—1 TIM. i: 15.

DEAR FRIEND: Has God's Holy Spirit shown you that you are a *sinner*?

What! you may ask; can I not discover that I am a sinner but by the light of the Holy Ghost? I tell you frankly and at once that you *can not*.

I am free to acknowledge that, without the Holy Ghost, you can easily learn that you are a sinner from the word of God, or confess yourself a sinner in prayer; but to see yourself a sinner in the light of Divine teaching, to feel it with a divinely-enlightened conscience, and to realize the terrible *fact*, as in the very presence of the God of infinite holiness, and in reference to the solemn realities of a coming eternity, is a matter of awful *experience*—not of mere *learning* or customary *confession*!

O, how dreadful it would be were you convinced by the Holy Spirit that you are "condemned already," ruined, lost, and in danger of hell every breath you draw! I wish you were so convinced; I pray God you may be, even this very moment; for, were you to die an unpardoned sinner, (and you *may* die any moment,) you would lift up your eyes in hell, being in torment, and find yourself a sinner for evermore where no Savior ever comes!

Perhaps you say, as another once did: "I admit I am a sinner; I know that I have sinned; but I can not understand what you mean by saying that I am a *lost* sinner—a *ruined* sinner. I am not *lost*; I am not *ruined*, as you say."

"Well, I know you are not *finally* lost, or you would not be here. Bless God for that mercy. But if you are *not lost*, you can have nothing to do with the Savior, for he has come 'to seek and to save that which was lost.'"

It may be, however, that you have heard so much in the

preaching of the sanctuary about *sinners* and *lost sinners*, that you will readily admit that the Bible teaches that, as sinners, we are all utterly ruined and lost. But do you feel that the Bible speaks true to *you*, when it comes to you personally, and says: You are a *sinner*; you are *ruined* and *lost*, for *you* are "condemned already," and the wrath of God abideth upon *you*! "*Thou art the man!*" is quite a different thing from the easy-going acknowledgment, "We are all sinners."

When D'Aubigné was a student, he heard Robert Haldane reading a chapter from the Epistle to the Romans, concerning all men being *sinners by nature*. He was astonished at it, but, being clearly convinced by the passages read to him, he said to Mr. Haldane: "Now I do indeed see this doctrine in the Bible." "Yes," replied he, "*but do you see it in your heart?*" It was a simple question, but it proved the sword of the Spirit, and awakened his slumbering conscience to recognize the terrible fact, *that sin was in his heart*; and, by the grace of God, it led to his conversion to Christ, for he immediately felt his need of Jesus when he found himself a *lost sinner*.

My friend, has this experience been *yours*? Have you seen sin in *your heart*? Have you seen and felt it to be a poison which has passed through every part of your moral nature?

Thousands of persons have had such a soul-harrowing sight and sense of sin in their hearts and lives, that it has so burdened their spirits that they have been well-nigh driven to despair, and some of them have been almost deprived of life; and, perhaps, you have never lost an hour's quiet sleep, nor relish for a single meal, by a sight of your soul's sinful and lost condition! And yet, if you only saw it by the grace of the Holy Ghost, your condition is quite as bad and hopeless as theirs?

How dreadful your case!—a sinner not far from perdition and yet gay, happy, careless, and reckless of eternity! Notwithstanding all your outward correctness of deportment and periodical religiousness, your case is desperate! But, if you *will* go to hell, do n't mock God by the way, pretending to serve him when you know that all your praying, hearing, praising, and partaking of the Lord's Supper, is but a downright insult to the All-seeing One!

Many are deceiving themselves by *joining themselves to the Church of Christ before being joined by the Holy Spirit to Christ himself!* The Holy Ghost, when he comes in saving power, will "make havoc of the Church," in so far as it is composed of such members. He has done so in the case of thousands, and he is doing so still even among ourselves.

It is greatly to be feared that many of those who frequent our communion tables are "*not saved*," and will be in hell forever, unless they repent of their Church-membership and all their other sins, and be brought to Jesus for pardon and peace. Religion, you see, saves none! "*The precious blood of Christ*" alone can save us from sin and wrath. Are you, my dear friend, "*saved or lost?*" If you are *saved*, you remember a time when you were *lost*; and you can tell something of *your* conviction and conversion. Those who are *saved* can tell how they were brought to a sense of sin and a knowledge of salvation.

"If you do not find out your sin, and bring it to Calvary to get it pardoned and washed away through the blood of Jesus, be sure your sin will find you out, and bring you to the judgment seat, to be condemned of Jesus, and sent away into everlasting punishment."

A little girl, who had told her mother a lie before she left home, was greatly troubled when she heard a minister say these awful things in his sermon: "*O, that lie!*" she said within herself; "*I must bring it to Calvary, or it will send me to hell!*" She was led, step by step, to see herself a great sinner, although a little girl; and she walked miles to see the minister, to ask him how she was to be saved. By and by, she was enabled to lay her sins on Jesus, and, when she was asked afterward if she had laid her sins on Jesus, she replied: "*O yes, and I'll never lay any more.*"

My dear friend, have you laid *your* sins on Jesus? and has it made you so averse to sin and so full of desires after holiness, that you now feel anxious to "sin no more?"

But there is not only pardon in Jesus, there is every spiritual blessing a ruined sinner needs. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."

A minister, who had been accustomed to consider the Gospel extremely simple and intelligible, and having little in it, was struck one day with the expression, "*The unsearchable*

LOST OR SAVED.

riches of Christ." "The unsearchable riches of Christ," he said within himself; "I never found, I never knew that there were unsearchable riches in him!" He became deeply convinced of sin; and, while pacing his room some time afterward, he was led to contemplate those two passages of Scripture, "*Without shedding of blood is no remission,*" and "*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*" He believed in Jesus, washed in his blood, and was filled with a "*joy unspeakable.*"

"I went up stairs and down stairs," said he, "backward and forward in my room, clapping my hands for joy, and crying out, '*I have found him—I have found him—I have found him whom my soul loveth,*' and, for a little time, as the apostle said, whether in the body or out of the body I can hardly tell."

My dear friend, have you seen anything of "the unsearchable riches of Christ?" Have you had a spiritual conviction of sin, and an evangelical conversion to God? Are you living for self and the world, or for God and eternity? Ask yourself seriously, before you do anything else, this all-important question: AM I LOST OR SAVED?

SAY, sinner! hath a voice within
Oft whispered to thy secret soul,
Urged thee to leave the ways of sin,
And yield thy heart to God's control?

Sinner! it was a heavenly voice,—
It was the Spirit's gracious call;
It bade thee make the better choice,
And haste to seek in Christ thine all.

God's Spirit will not always strive
With hardened, self-destroying man;
Ye, who persist his love to grieve,
May never hear his voice again.

Sinner! perhaps this very day
Thy last accepted time may be:
O! shouldst thou grieve him now away,
Then hope may never beam on thee.